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AUTHOR Castetter, William B.
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ABSTRACT

This monograph deals with a continuing personnel problem in the public sector of society--what to do about the individual who cannot or will not meet role expectations. It is designed to provide a framework within which the problems of marginal performers can be assessed and treated. The focus is initially on the meaning of marginal or ineffective performance, as well as the major sources and significance of such performance to both the individual and the organization. This discussion is followed by the presentation of a model of the personnel effectiveness planning process, including a discussion of the three elements in this process--performance effectiveness standards, performance effectiveness analysis, and performance effectiveness control. The model has been developed as a frame of reference for thorough analysis of actual position performance, causes associated with various types of less than satisfactory performance, and training or other influences that might be more appropriate to achieve satisfactory resolution of personnel problems. The central concern of the entire text is on strategies that a school system can employ to deal with performance problems of personnel considered to be failures or whose decline in competence is in process. (Author/MLF)

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Educational Administration and the Ineffective Performer

William B. Castetter

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PREFACE

It is conceivable that the last quarter of the twentieth century will be pointed to in the annals of organized human activity as an era in which the major focus of managerial concern shifted from non-human to human resources.

The people problems to which contemporary organizations are now directing their efforts are numerous and complex. These include the challenges of collective behavior, especially to organizations in the public sector; rising expectations of personnel; the increasing costs of human time; changing life-styles and attitudes of employees; and the impact of juridical and governmental intrusion into organizational life.

This monograph deals with a continuing personnel problem in the public sector of society—what to do about the individual who cannot or will not meet role expectations. While it is true that the perplexities relating to the marginal performer have been with society for a long time, the social, organizational, moral, legal, and political upheavals to which the contemporary world is witness involves new conditions, demands, and insights which need to be taken into consideration if modern organizations are to make full use of the talent and potential of their human resources.

Several assumptions are made in this document relative to personnel administration and human resources. These include the following:

- The attainment of unit and organizational objectives depends upon the effectiveness of its human resources.
- Every organization has an obligation to provide an environment for full development of the potential of its personnel.
- Every organization must be concerned about achieving maximum return on its investment in human resources. Likewise, the individual staff member anticipates that his efforts will yield maximum returns in the form of position-related satisfaction, compensation, and opportunities for development.

The policies and procedures of every organization should be focused upon identifying individuals who are promotable and those whose performance is less than satisfactory. Those individuals who cannot or will not perform effectively in the positions to which they are assigned become organizational liabilities which the system cannot support indefinitely.

The content of the discussion which follows is designed to provide a framework within which the problems of marginal performers can be assessed and treated in terms of the foregoing assumptions.

W.B.C.

May, 1978

EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE INEFFECTIVE PERFORMER

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

It is generally understood that all forms of organizations—be they prisons, mental institutions, unions, corporations, educational enterprises, or military groups—are confronted constantly with problems fundamentally similar in nature. These organizations must, for example:

- Identify a common purpose and secure agreement on that purpose among people who are involved in the cooperative effort.
- Develop and implement the total goal structure.
- Create positions to carry out the work associated with the organizational mission.
- Recruit, select, and place people in positions.
- Assist people appointed to positions to function effectively and efficiently.
- Establish an organizational climate conducive to voluntary cooperation of personnel.
- Adjust the organization to meet changing internal and external conditions.
- Provide for the organization's perpetuation.

In establishing and achieving the foregoing organizational conditions, there are numerous and complex problems which confront and require resolution by institutional authorities. The most pressing problems arising out of the administrative struggle to enable organizations to survive, grow, and remain viable over time are those involving recruitment, selection, induction, appraisal, development, utilization, and conservation of human resources. In contrast to much of the literature on personnel administration which deals with the process of helping all personnel to acquire and to improve the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes which will enable them to carry out their present duties and to prepare themselves for increased responsibilities, the focus of this monograph is on personnel failure. More specifically, it is concerned with that small group of individuals encountered in every school system who are failing or who have failed consistently to perform effectively as members of the organization. We shall focus initially on the meaning of marginal or ineffective performance, as well as the major sources and significance of such performance to both the individual and the organization. This discussion is followed by the presentation of a model of the personnel effectiveness planning process, including

a discussion of the three elements in this process—*performance effectiveness standards, performance effectiveness analysis,* and *performance effectiveness control.* The central concern of the entire text is on strategies which a school system can employ to deal with performance problems of personnel considered to be failures or whose decline in competence is in process.

SECTION 2: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

The cost of personnel time to school systems is high and keeps rising with the adoption of each annual budget. The combination of unions, legislation, inflation, competition, rising expectations, and decreasing personnel productivity make the rapidly increasing costs of personnel time a major organizational problem. In the exchange which takes place between the individual and the system, the former anticipates money, benefits, and psychic income; the latter expects delivery to clients of educational services of high quality. Ineffective performance adds not only to the existing high personnel costs; it diminishes the quality of education to which the community is entitled and for which its citizens are taxed. In the text which follows, the impact of ineffective performance will be discussed in terms of three dimensions: *organizational*, *individual*, and *social*.

Table 1 lists various types of factors related to ineffective performance. Some of the factors are direct; others indirect. Some are felt immediately by the system; the impact of others may take place over a longer period of time. In the contemporary society in which school systems must operate, neither they, the society, nor the individuals under consideration can ill afford the direct and indirect consequences of ineffective performance illustrated in Table 1. As the costs of human time continue to increase, and as the competition for public funds accelerates, school organizations can and have a right to achieve a return on their investment in human resources. In order to achieve this return, better solutions to the problems associated with maximizing effective and minimizing ineffective performance will need to be developed. This is the concern of the text which follows.

TABLE 1
TANGIBLE AND INTANGIBLE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH INEFFECTIVE PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE

Organization Factors	Individual Factors	Social Factors
A. During Employment	Career Impact	Client Dissatisfaction
Tardiness		
Absenteeism		
Retraining		
Reduced Productivity		Community Relations
Legal Costs	Employability Impact	
Disruption of Plans, Schedules		
Increased Supervisory Responsibility		
Errors and Inefficiency		Credibility of System Ability to Render
B. After Separation	Social Impact	Effective Service
Loss of Investment (Former Personnel)		
Morale of System Members (Current Personnel)		Diminution of Quality
Recruitment (New Personnel)	Family Impact	of Educational Services
Selection and Placement (New Personnel)		
Break-in Costs (New Personnel)		Product Fails to Perform According to System Standards
Separation Costs (Former Personnel)	Psychological Impact	
Disruption of Plans, Schedules		
Net Compensation (Difference Between New and Former Salary and Benefits)		

SECTION 3: MAJOR SOURCES OF INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

Somewhere in the classrooms, offices, and other work stations of every school system one is likely to encounter two kinds of performers—effective and ineffective. The latter are generally fewer in number than the former, and are referred to frequently in the literature by such terms as the marginal performer, the unsatisfactory performer, the ineffective performer, the underperformer, the problem worker, the dissatisfied worker, the alienated worker, the nonpromotable subordinate, the dislocated employee, or the maladjusted position holder. People failure, the motivation crisis, occupational boredom, blue collar blues, work dissatisfaction, and organizational alienation are media expressions employed to indicate the widening gap in the world of work between organizational expectations and personnel performance.

By definition, the ineffective performer is one who is not meeting the organizational requirements, specifications, or standards for the position he occupies. The standards may be stated in the form of certain written objectives to be achieved, or they may be subjective judgments made of a subordinate by his superior. The sources of unsatisfactory performance, as indicated in the text following, may be found in the individual, the organization, and the external environment.

Table 2 includes a breakdown of the three major factors contributing to unsatisfactory personnel performance. Each of these sources will be examined in the text following in order to: a) elaborate upon the various types of influences affecting individual performance; and b) develop a structure for the performance analysis process to be described in section four. Although we shall treat separately each of the major sources noted in Table 2, it is clear that the contributory causes of ineffective behavior do not necessarily develop or remain in isolation. It is more likely that there are combinations of influences shown in Table 2 at work in many cases of ineffective performance.

TABLE 2
MAJOR SOURCES OF INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

The Individual	The Organization	The External Environment
Intellectual Impairment	The System	The Family
Psychological Impairment	The Role	Economic Conditions
Physiological Impairment	The Group	Political Conditions
Demotivation	Supervisory Behavior	Legal Conditions
Personality Factors	The Organizational Climate	Societal Values
Obsolescence		Labor Market
Position Preparation		Changing Technology
Value Orientations		Unions

THE INDIVIDUAL AND INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

The influences within the individual which create a disparity between his role behavior and role prescription are numerous, complex, and are not readily subject to instant diagnosis. These include:

Intelligence

Some people are not effective in the position they occupy because they do not possess the intellectual abilities needed to deal with problems with which they are confronted. When the abilities required of the position are largely verbal, as they are as one proceeds up the hierarchical ladder, individuals lacking in such ability frequently become overdependent on colleagues who have such skills, commit undue errors and blunders in decision making, and are incapable of attaining the intellectual level needed to succeed or to excel in the position. People who occupy positions which require the possession of various kinds of knowledge and skills to acquire and communicate knowledge, to create new knowledge, or to apply imagination to the resolution of position problems, and do not possess these intellectual dimensions usually do not find satisfaction in their work nor do they achieve the level of performance expected of them.

Physical and Physiological Impairment

The range of causes affecting position performance due to physical or physiological impairment include chronic physical illness which prevents personnel from achieving consistent position presence; possession of physical characteristics which interfere with attainment of position requirements; lack of physical characteristics needed for the position; insufficient muscular or sensory ability; and physical disorders emanating from occupational stress. The bus driver who is color blind, the coach who cannot engage in physical activity, the choral director with a vocal impairment, the principal suffering from coronary heart disease, and the typist afflicted with chronic arthritis are illustrative.

Psychological Impairment

An understanding of the relationship between psychological health and role performance is a vital aspect of performance analysis. The discussion which follows treats psychological impairment under two categories: mental health and mental illness. Positive mental health may be defined as the personal condition which expresses itself in responses of greater:

- self-esteem
- morale
- trust in people
- friendly interpersonal relations

- relative satisfaction with life
- emotional security
- freedom from interfering manifestations of anxiety[1]

By mental illness, on the other hand, we refer to more pronounced mental disorders including neuroses and psychoses. Neurosis is a mild form of mental disorder in which the troubled mind draws attention to itself by causing some bodily symptoms. The more important forms of neurosis include anxiety, hysteria, and neurasthenia. Psychosis is a severe mental disease which manifests itself in abnormal behavior, reactions, and ideas, the consequence of which is that the person is no longer able to cope with his environment.

The interest of the organization in the psychological health of its personnel centers upon: a) providing an organizational climate for the well-being and fullest development of its human resources; b) developing a supervisory behavior system to assist people to achieve an overall level of success, personal satisfaction, position effectiveness, and functional excellence; and c) taking corrective action to remove persons from positions in which they cannot or will not perform according to system expectations.

Motivation

Motivation has been defined as any action or event that causes someone's behavior to change. From an organizational standpoint the standard motivational approaches which have evolved over the past century and a half are *pay, direction and control, job design,* and *benevolence.*[2] The school system's interest in motivation is to influence the behavior of its personnel toward the goals of the system. We can imply from the definition that motivation is an internalized force based on needs that result in drives and ultimately in behavior.

The standard organizational motivators noted above should not be construed as the only kinds of influences employed to induce people to perform effectively. Nor should we accept the notion that these motivators influence the behavior of any and all personnel, under any and all circumstances. Standard motivators are important to every organization, especially if new dimensions of traditional influences are combined with entirely new approaches designed to appeal to the needs of contemporary man.

Every school administrator is responsible for getting work done through the efforts of subordinates. Consequently, he is forever challenged to find ways to influence the behavior of the human resources under his direction

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[1] Arthur Kornhauser, *Mental Health of the Industrial Worker* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1965), 25.

[2] Saul W. Gellerman, *The Management of Human Resources* (Hinsdale, Illinois: The Dryden Press, 1976), 15-17.

toward unit and system goals. The administrator concerned with ineffective performance will have motivational questions such as the following about individuals whose performance is less than satisfactory:

- What are the sources of demotivation? Individual? Organizational? Environmental?
- What have been the impact of the traditional motivators on the individual's behavior?
- Have the traditional motivators been applied appropriately?
- What are the immediate needs of the individual?
- What are his immediate goals?
- Are the motivators now employed congruent with the individual's needs and goals?
- Does the system have the understanding it needs to provide incentives which might induce greater effort and contribution from the individual?

Those who administer school systems need to be concerned with motivation of personnel because it involves the enthusiasm and drive of human resources in their employ. Contemporary organizations concerned with creating a highly motivated work force accept the premise that the realization of this goal is based on a long-term endeavor which becomes an integral part of the system's purposes, policies, procedures, and plans.

Personality Factors

Personality may be defined as the sum total of the physical, mental, emotional, and social characteristics of an individual. The importance of personality to effective position performance is undeniable. Personality factors have been identified, for example, as the major cause of failure among executives.[3] The individual who possesses the intelligence, the aptitude, and the experience for a certain position may fail because of his inability to get along with or to motivate other people. The content of certain tests designed to measure personality include, for example, personalism, altruism, rationalism, social aggressiveness, social responsiveness, social cooperation, conformity, assertiveness, liberality, intellectual aggressiveness, efficiency, and purposiveness.[4] The primary purpose of a supervisory behavior system when dealing with ineffective performers is not to modify the individual's personality. Most systems do not have the time nor the capabilities to engage in psychotherapy. Learning all we can about the personalities of ineffective performers and designing or placing

[3] H. G. Kaufman, *Obsolescence and Professional Career Development* (New York: American Management Associations, 1974), 62.

[4] Joseph J. Famularo, ed., *Handbook of Modern Personnel Administration* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972), 16-4-16-6.

people in positions in which the strengths of their personalities can be optimized and wherein goal achievement for them becomes a reality is the more preferable alternative.

Obsolescence

Obsolescence has been defined as the degree to which people lack the up-to-date knowledge or skills necessary to maintain effective performance in either their current or future work roles.[5] As illustrated in Figure 1, there are three major causes of obsolescence: individual, organizational, and environmental. Several key observations which can be made about the concept of obsolescence and its relationships to ineffective performance include the following:

- Most definitions of ineffectiveness are linked to obsolescence.
- Obsolescence is a consequence of individual failure to keep abreast of knowledge or to maintain skills required by the position.

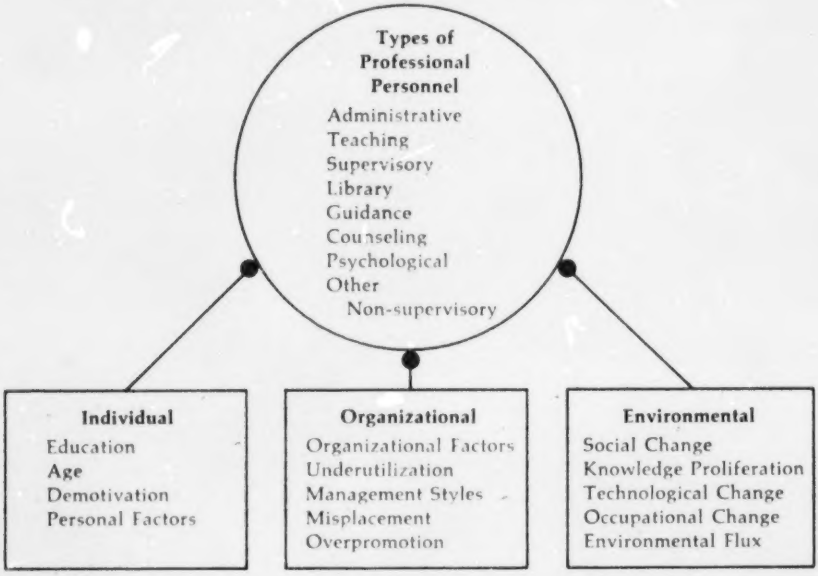

Figure 1. Factors Contributing Directly and Indirectly to Personnel Obsolescence

[5] H. G. Kaufman, *op. cit.*, 23. Other useful references which examine adult development over the life course include Daniel J. Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978); and Gail Sheehey, *Passages: Predictable Crises of Adult Life* (New York: Mason/Charter, 1976).

- Obsolescence is attributed to a deficiency in rather than a deterioration of skills and knowledge already acquired.
- Obsolescence involves change—in the environment, the organization, or the individual.
- Obsolescence occurs more frequently among professionals than among service personnel, especially in administrative and supervisory positions where individuals fail to keep up with knowledge or to maintain skills requisite for effective performance.
- Obsolescence may be viewed as ineffective performance which may be improved through appropriate individual development programs.

Obsolescence, then, is an organizational reality, triggered in part by the preoccupation, indeed the obsession of our nation with change. Not only is the pace of change accelerating; so too is its scope and scale. What obsolescence is, what it means to organizational survival and viability, and what plans should be made to cope with its various facets are important considerations for educational institutions. School systems, for example, have two characteristics which are conducive to personnel obsolescence—the relatively large number of professionals on the school staff whose positions are constantly subject to change in knowledge and in technical skill requirements; and their (school systems) generally conservative nature. School systems concerned with preparing their clients to adjust to an ever-growing, ever-changing, complex, specialized, technological world must resolve the problem of staff obsolescence or face the prospect of becoming an obsolescent organization.

Position Preparation

Another cause of ineffective performance, not necessarily unrelated to obsolescence, may be referred to as position preparation. The position incumbent, for example, may be ineffective for any one or any combination of the following factors associated with position preparation.

- Failure of the selection process to reject the individual because of a preparation deficiency.
- Placement of the individual in a position for which he has had insufficient preparation.
- Promotion of the individual to a position for which he was not qualified.
- Transfer of the individual from one position in the system to another without regard to the congruence between the position and the person.

Most of the foregoing situations in which individuals are assigned to positions for which they are unqualified can be traced to faulty organiza-

tional procedures, although it is clear that the best of selection processes are imperfect. People who appear to be qualified, who have excellent credentials, and who perform exceedingly well in interviews sometimes turn out to be highly incompetent on the job.

Individual Value Systems

The remaining individual sources of ineffective performance to be examined in this section are the values and beliefs of the position holder. Spranger has defined values as the constellation of likes, dislikes, viewpoints, shoulds, inner inclinations, rational and irrational judgments, prejudices, and association pattern that determine a person's view of the world.[6] Values are the expectations by the individual about what ought to be; the ethical concepts of right and wrong, good or bad, which guide the behavior of people within and outside of organizations. A belief, on the other hand, is an expectation held by an individual that a given cause leads to one or more results. Our concern herein is the relationship among individual value orientations, beliefs, and ineffective performance in school systems.

Beginning now, let us review some of the assumptions about individual values and role relationships. Once these assumptions have been examined, the impact of individual values on role effectiveness can be viewed from a broader perspective. Our frame of reference for discussion of individual values and role relationships is Figure 2, which is a descriptive model of values in the work place. Assumptions which derive from or which can be made about the conceptual basis of the values model shown in Figure 2 include the following:

- Values, like personality needs, are structured hierarchically, and are construed in Figure 2 to be psychological levels of existence descriptive of personal values and life styles.
- Different individuals in any organization have different value systems.
- Individual values influence decisions made by the position incumbent as he performs his role.
- Role relationships are affected by individual value orientations. Disparate value systems, for example, are sources of conflict between teacher-principal, principal-superintendent, superintendent-board, board-community, teacher-parent, principal-parent, principal-community, and so on.
- Because of the increasing heterogeneity of values in all work organizations, a new work ethic is emerging which will require different approaches to personnel administration.

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[6] Eduard Spranger, *Types of Men*, translated by Paul J. Pigors (Halle, Germany: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1928).

- Disparate value systems have extensive implications for individual effectiveness, especially as regards plans for the selection, placement, performance appraisal, and development of personnel.

Values then, are factors conducive to both compatability and conflict in school organizations. As we attempt to understand better the different value systems of personnel, a number of questions need to be raised. For example, how does the system go about dealing with individuals at disparate value levels illustrated in Figure 2? With the individual who holds strong convictions which are in conflict with the role prescriptions for his job? With mismatched values between superior and subordinate? When values are the root influence of ineffective behavior, the concern of the system is to understand better the nature of those values influencing such behavior, to communicate to the individual under consideration the quality of human relationships to which the system is committed, as well as the expectancy levels of performance which the system requires of personnel, and to attempt to develop strategies to resolve problems of performance ineffectiveness within this context.[7]

THE ORGANIZATION AND INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

As noted in Table 2, the school system itself should be considered as one of the three major sources conducive to ineffective behavior. Five organizational elements related to ineffective behavior are examined in the text following.

The School System

The school system, like other organizational settings, exerts a unique set of forces on each individual in its employ. This set of forces, often referred to as the formal organization, includes the system's pattern of roles and a blueprint for their coordination. The formal organization exists independently of particular people and herein is the root cause of many cases of ineffective performance. One of the unfortunate by-products of the formal organization is that the leadership responsible for its survival and growth frequently extends the impersonality of the formal organization to the human organization and the individuals who comprise it. All too

[7] For a more complete treatment of the relationship between educational administration and value systems see the following: Roald F. Campbell *et al., Introduction to Educational Administration*, 5th ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1977); Jacob W. Getzels, *et al., Educational Administration as a Social Process* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1968); James M. Lipham and James A. Hoeh, Jr., *The Principalship: Foundations and Functions* (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974); Lawrence S. Wrightsman, *Social Psychology in the Seventies* (Monterey, Cal.: Brooks-Cole Pub. Co., 1972).

EXISTENTIAL. This employee likes a job where the goals and problems are more important than the money or the prestige associated with the position. He prefers work of his own choosing that offers continuing challenge and requires imagination and initiative. To him, a good boss is one who gives him access to the information he needs and lets him do the job in his own way.

MANIPULATIVE. The preferred job for this employee is varied, allows free wheeling and dealing, and offers pay and bonuses on the basis of results. He feels responsible for his own success and is constantly on the lookout for new opportunities. A good boss for this employee understands the politics of getting the job done, knows how to bargain, and is firm but fair.

EGOCENTRIC. The two major requirements of a job for this employee are that it pay well and that it keep people off his back. He shuns work that ties him down, but will do it if he must to get the money he wants. Because of his raw, rugged value system, he needs a boss who is tough but allows him to be tough too.

REACTIVE. This level of psychological development is restricted primarily to infants, people with serious brain deterioration, and certain psychopathic conditions. For practical purposes, employees are not ordinarily found at Level 1.

SOCIOCENTRIC. A job which allows the development of friendly relationships with people in his work group appeals to this employee. Working with people toward a common goal is more important than getting caught up in a materialistic rat race. He likes a boss who fosters close harmony by being more a friendly person than a boss.

CONFORMIST. This employee likes job security, well-defined rules, and equal treatment. He feels entitled to some good breaks in exchange for his loyalty. His mode of dress and subservience to protocol cause him to blend with the masses and lack individuality.

TRIBALISTIC. This employee is best suited to routine work, friendly people, fair play, and above all a good boss. He likes a boss who tells him exactly what to do and how to do it, and who encourages him by doing it with him. An employee at this level may realize he doesn't have the best job in the world, but feels he does as well as others with jobs like his.

Figure 2. Descriptive Model of Values in the Work Place.
Source: Vincent S. Flowers *et. al., Managerial Values for Working* (New York: American Management Associations, 1975), 2.

often the leadership of a school system fails to understand or to take into account considerations such as the following:

- A system is continually subject to complex and unpredictable initiations and responses of individual human beings which form its membership.
- Decisions made at the central level have both positive and negative effects on specific members of the system.
- Certain types of decisions made at the system's central level contribute to ineffective, irrational, and anti-organizational behavior.
- The forces which are changing the mores of society, the system and its members, as well as its clients, will require continuing adaptations by the system.
- Decisions made about people involve moral and ethical as well as economic considerations.
- Concern for individuals and attainment of organizational goals are not incompatible concepts.
- Focus on the formal organization, its structures, rules, coordination, and budgets tends to depersonalize the human organization and to accelerate the frequency of human failure.

The essence of the foregoing comments is that a school system and the management within it often permits or contributes to individual failure. The system that fails to provide sufficient resources for the development of personnel, which limits its communications, which lacks an effective performance appraisal system, which is unconcerned about opportunities for personnel development, which is oriented to procedures and ritual rather than to achievement, whose system of rewards and punishments is unrelated to individual effectiveness, which lacks a climate for individual success, is the system that invites people failure.

THE ROLE

As noted previously, every school system has a pattern of roles and role relationships as well as plans for their coordination. Role incumbents may fail to achieve role expectations for a variety of reasons, including selection error, misplacement, inadequate preparation, role prescription, role conflict, and role overload. The implications of role concepts such as the foregoing are explored in the text following.

Role Prescription. Roles are defined in terms of role expectations. The behavior which is related to a position rather than to the person who occupies the position is referred to as role expectations. When an individual acts in a way that is highly congruent with the expected pattern of behavior he is said to be effective. When he deviates sharply from existing role

prescriptions he is said to be ineffective. Many school systems have employed written position guides, position descriptions, delegations, assignments, and organization manuals, which are derived from missions, goals, purposes, and programs, to clarify the behavior of an individual as it relates to the position he holds within the system. Other institutions employ less formal or direct means of prescribing roles, especially through the use of either written or unwritten praise or censure of the performance of the individual in the position. Since we are concerned with the role an individual performs and the factors affecting his effectiveness, let us examine some of the problems related to role prescription.

Role Placement. People sometimes fail to perform effectively in the positions they occupy because of misplacement. This means that the qualifications of the individual and the requirements of the position are not congruent. The error may be due to the school system's selection procedure, which fails to detect the lack of position qualification, or to other factors such as political or personal considerations which ignore the consequences of position-person mismatches.

Role Ambiguity. When the role expectations have not been clarified for a position holder, he suffers to some degree from role ambiguity. The individual may have less than all of the information he needs to perform effectively. When the individual has inadequate information about the reporting relationship of the position, about the responsibilities of the position, about the matters on which he can and cannot make decisions, about the methods he should employ to carry out the role, his role expectations are ambiguous. Role ambiguity is the opposite of role clarity and is conducive to uncertainty for those subjected to this type of organizational deficiency. The consequences of role ambiguity are far-reaching, such as individual tension, inefficiency, lack of position-related satisfaction, and emotional stress.[8]

Role Conflict. Role conflict has been defined as "the simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other."[9] Consider, for example, the mathematics teacher who is a union representative; the principal whose reporting relationship is to both the chief executive and to the assistant superintendent for instruction; the business manager who reports to both the board of education and the superintendent of schools; the principal who belongs to both the teachers' association and the superintendency team. In each instance role conflict arises because there is uncer-

[8] See Peter Warr and Toby Wall, *Work and Well-Being* (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books Ltd., 1975), 148-155.

[9] Wall and Warr, *op. cit.*, 147.

tainty about whose expectations are to be met. The consequences of role conflict indicated by research studies are considerable, for both the individual and the system. Internal conflicts, lower job satisfaction, and less confidence in management are affective reactions experienced by individuals. The organization suffers negative effects in terms of ineffective performance (unwillingness of individuals affected to make decisions, withdrawal from organizational activity, etc.).

Role Overload. Role overload exists when the work assigned to a position is more than the individual has the time or the ability to complete. The results of role overload are not difficult to visualize. People who do not have the ability to complete the work may be judged as ineffective. People who have the ability but not the time to complete the work may be considered unproductive. Suffice it is to say that when the variety, urgency, and number of expectations exceed the ability, the time, or the endurance of the individual, there will be stress. When stress increases, there is an increase in insecurity and a decrease in the effectiveness and the efficiency of task performance.

Role Perception. Three dimensions of role perception should be noted which are conducive to ineffective performance. The first is focused upon how the individual views his own role, how he perceives what is expected of him in the position he occupies. Role conflict may develop from this aspect of role perception, for example, when the incumbent misperceives or redefines his role according to his vision of what the role is or ought to be. The second dimension refers to the manner in which other individuals or groups perceive the role of the role incumbent. The principal, for example, may view his role primarily as a manager rather than as a leader, or vice versa, and his behavior will be directed toward activities consistent with the perceived role. The teachers under the direction of the principal, however, may perceive his role to be a manager rather than a leader, or vice versa. In either case the differences in role perceptions can result in individual behavior which is ineffective or judged to be ineffective by those whose relationships are involved with the position of the incumbent. The third dimension is the role incumbent's perception of other personnel within the system. His perceptions of what other people can do and will do are related to his effectiveness. Each of these facets of the role of the individual is linked to some degree to role clarity and the responsibility which the system shares regarding role comprehension.

Role Boundaries. Role conflict, as the foregoing discussion suggests, is not confined to the individual. In addition to boundaries which separate the school system from its external environment, there are internal boundaries between positions and among groups of positions such as departments, divisions, and schools. For example, the business manager (a staff

position) who makes decisions about the instructional program (a line function); the team teacher who crosses academic disciplinary boundaries; and the mathematics supervisor who invades the province of the principal are illustrations of role conflict related to the organization structure. Such conflicts may lead to position stress and individual strain and ultimately to ineffectiveness in performance.

The Group

The roles of practically all individuals employed in a school system are linked to group behavior. The relationship of a person to a group and, in the other direction, of the group to the person, creates conditions which affect individual performance. The individual must work with certain groups—such as the principal with his faculty; the team member with the teaching team; the principal with the superintendency team and other work groups. The individual may choose to work with other aggregations of people such as Parent-Teacher Associations, unions, and various kinds of pressure groups. A group within a school system may exert positive or negative effects on the individual. A faculty may restrict, inhibit, or even repress an individual principal. They may resist any efforts toward constructive change. Groups may set unreasonably low work norms, which when exceeded by an individual calls for ostracization or other forms of punishment. Groups may insist on working conditions which are unreasonable, yet punish members who do not support such demands. Groups also have been pointed to as the root causes of prejudice and other forms of unfair treatment of individuals. The consequences of group relationships include intense anxiety or anger that constantly disrupts the role effectiveness of the individual.

Supervision: Process and Role

Supervision is one of the essential components of a school organization, the purpose of which is to promote those conditions which help the organization to achieve its goals. Supervision in organizations is expressed as both a process and a role.[10] The term supervisor is conceived broadly in this discussion and is taken to mean an administrator who directs the work of other adults. The three primary groups to whom the supervisor has responsibilities are: a) his subordinates; b) his administrative peers; and c) his administrative superiors. Problems relating to ineffective performance growing out of the supervisor's role and the supervisory process are numerous and complex. The *individual performing* the role of supervisor fails, according to numerous studies, for reasons which include human relations

[10] Robert J. Alfonso, *et al.*, *Instructional Supervision: A Behavior System* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1975), 3. See also W. Richard Plunkett, *Supervision: The Direction of People at Work* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company, Publishers, 1975), Chapter 4.

difficulties, character and personality defects, improper attitudes, and lack of skill in carrying out the supervisory process. The *individual being supervised* may experience difficulties with the supervisory system because: a) the design of the supervisory process may be obsolete; and b) the style of the supervisor may not be conducive to securing voluntary cooperation.

Organizational Climate

As has been noted earlier in this discussion, the nature of school systems as total entities is related to the success and failure of individuals in its employ. Organizational climate refers to prevailing conditions which exist due to a combination of plans designed to guide and to enhance individual behavior. The elements of organizational climate, as identified in one study, are listed in Table 3 along with the meaning of each dimension. One of the interesting observations made by the authors of the climate study cited in Table 3 is that the items that were most significant were closely related to the *clarity* factor. Thus, it would appear that the organization which concentrates on clarifying its system and unit goals, which indicates what good performance is and how it will be measured, which makes available information for decisions, which establishes organizational integration through effective communication, and which clarifies the relationship between compensation and performance is the system which is building a basis for the success and satisfaction of the individual as well as for organizational effectiveness.

THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT AND INEFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

While the emphasis of the previous discussion has been on individual and organizational factors which contribute to performance failure, examination of Table 2 indicates that there are several forces which affect the success of the individual in the performance of his role, and which tend to operate independently of the work place or the work group. It is upon this group of factors that the discussion following is centered.

Societal Values

Cultural values are associated with people failure in school systems. For example, some of the core values in American culture which have implications for personnel administration are freedom, equity, the work ethic, organizational democracy, morality, and integrity. The community in which a school system is located will have views on these values, as will the system leadership and the individuals in its employ. Listed below are several illustrations of the manner in which cultural values impact upon personnel failure.

TABLE 3
DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

Dimension	Meaning
Organizational Clarity	The degree to which the goals and plans of the organization are clearly perceived by its members.
Decision-Making Structure	The flow of information for decision making through the organizational structure and the extent to which that structure facilitates positive outcomes.
Organizational Integration	The extent to which various subunits cooperate and communicate effectively toward the achievement of overall organization objectives.
Management Style	The extent to which people perceive encouragement to use their own initiative in performing their jobs, feel free to question constraints, and sense support from higher levels of management when needed.
Performance Orientation	The extent of emphasis placed upon individual accountability for clearly defined end results and high levels of performance.
Organizational Vitality	The extent to which people see the organization as a dynamic one, as reflected by the venturesomeness of its goals, the innovativeness of its decisions, and its responsiveness to changing conditions.
Compensation	The extent to which the compensation system is seen as equitable, competitive, and related to performance.
Human Resource Development	The extent to which individuals perceive opportunities within the organization that will allow people to develop to their full potential.

Source: George G. Gordon and Bonnie E. Goldberg, "Is There A Climate For Success?" *Management Review* 66, 5 (May, 1977), 37-44.

Academic Freedom. One of the values cherished by educators and strongly enmeshed in the fabric of American culture is academic freedom, which includes such elements as the rights of teachers to believe what they want on any subject, the teaching of controversial issues, the expression of individual beliefs orally and graphically, and the right to investigate and to discuss all branches of learning. Although academic freedom is deemed to be a cultural value of high order, it is the source of numerous personnel

dismissals when individual behavior associated with it is not congruent with values held concerning it by society. Many teachers have been dismissed for the instructional views they hold, the political causes they espouse, and the texts they use for instructional purposes. Librarians have been dismissed because of societal pressures related to library displays of controversial materials.

Equity. Equity has various dimensions in the school system. One of the most important is that all individuals should be treated fairly. The administrator who treats people unfairly, or the individual in the system who protests vehemently about the unfair treatment accorded to him or to other system members may contribute to their ineffectiveness or to other people's perception of their ineffectiveness. Equity in relation to decisions about personnel compensation is another dimension related to personnel failure. Ineffective behavior is commonplace for people who perceive they are not treated fairly in terms of compensation. Likewise, the behavior of women, members of ethnic groups, and the elderly in school systems can become anti-organizational and ineffective when they are treated or perceive that they are treated unfairly.

Morality and Integrity. Even though an individual's behavior outside of the school system may be unrelated to the quality of his position performance, the perceptions of other people about an individual's morality or integrity may have impact on the appraisal of his performance. His views on human sexuality, his behavior in the marriage contract, his willingness to meet his obligations, and to keep his word are facets of human behavior which, under certain conditions and in certain locations, will affect his performance. In brief, behavior at which society looks askance, at which the school system looks askance, or which is not congruent with the habits and values of other individuals and groups may contribute to performance problems at the work place.

The Family

The number of problems related to an individual's family that affect his performance is extensive. Sooner or later family-related problems arise which affect practically every individual whose name is affixed to a payroll. Some of the problems are transitory and have minimal effect upon work performance. Others are so serious or so durable that they interfere with or disrupt completely the individual's ability to maintain work continuity and emotional stability. The problems include those which threaten the family union such as desertion, infidelity, separation, divorce, threat of divorce, those which threaten the health of the family, those related to family relatives, to behavior of members of the family, those which place inordinate demands upon the individual performer, and those considerations

which take precedence over work demands. The individual whose performance is affected by family problems does not always inform his superiors of the existence of such situations, thereby precluding the sympathy, understanding, and close personal relationships which may be needed to assist the person to make appropriate adjustments.

Legal, Economic, Union Forces

Legal, economic, and union forces over which the system has no control are related to ineffective performance.

Legal. Various societal values have been enacted into law which protect the rights and provide certain privileges to educational personnel. Among the values for which there are statutory provisions at the state level are laws governing tenure, leaves of absence, conditions under which employment may be terminated, collective bargaining, compensation, and retirement. There are major laws enacted by the federal government in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries which constitute national public employment policy, and which directly or indirectly influence the employment policies of public and private educational institutions. While legislation is an indispensable element in the protection of personnel rights and privileges, instances are common where federal and state employment policy constrain personnel decisions and make for ineffective performance. Tenure laws make it possible for the ineffective performer to remain on the job well beyond the point where there is little or no return on the system's investment. The number of personnel in contemporary society who abuse the leave of absence privilege is much greater than is warranted. Some administrators allege that people are becoming unsatisfactory employees because of the protection which the government is giving them under Title VII and other civil rights legislation.[11] In brief, all legislation protecting personnel falls short of perfection in the sense that so much emphasis is placed upon personnel rights that the obligation to render a high level of service is lost sight of, and the system is constrained from making personnel decisions which will modify the behavior or separate the individual from the position. Legislation which permits the individual to become and remain an unsatisfactory performer creates consequences for the individual, the system, and society which are virtually impossible to correct.

Economic. Economic conditions have a way creating negative consequences for individuals, one aspect of which is unsatisfactory performance in the work place. During periods of inflation and decreasing enrollments it is not uncommon for boards of education to increase *class size* and to

[11] Civil Rights Act of 1964.

decrease *staff size*, the result of which is often greater work loads, tensions, negative attitudes, and personnel alienation. In periods when personnel demand exceeds supply individuals may be selected to occupy hard-to-fill positions who are marginal performers or who become ineffective in time. When supply exceeds demand, performance standards may be increased to the point where some personnel cannot achieve role expectations. Public pressures to reduce taxes sometimes results in layoffs or threats of unemployment which are not conducive to the level of service needed by the system and its clients. Distressed economic conditions in a given school system may lead to compensation levels which are not competitive and which create personnel dissatisfaction and lack of motivation to perform effectively.

Unions. It was noted in the previous discussion that federal and state employment policy came into being to protect personnel from what were or what were thought to be arbitrary or self-serving actions by entire organizations or by certain administrative officials therein. The growth of unions in the public sector has been attributed in part to similar reasons. But the consequences of protective employment legislation and unionism have not been conducive to system or to individual productivity. Many observers regard unions to be unproductive primarily because of contracts containing agreements which do not promote effectiveness. To the extent that contract provisions protect personnel, especially in areas such as seniority rights, discipline, and performance appraisal—to that extent personnel are able to become and to remain ineffective performers when in the absence of such paternalism they would not be so inclined. Rare is the union in public education which works cooperatively with school officials to improve the performance appraisal process; rare is the union which cooperates with the system in the outplacement of ineffective, marginal, and obsolescent personnel. Moreover, contemporary union contracts seem to eliminate merit pay, adhere to rigid position descriptions, and fail to encourage movements toward improvement of position design.

Unions, like other formal and informal organizations, have the capability to apply pressures or direct and indirect forms of punishment to members or non-members who oppose their actions, the usual consequence of which is individual performance which is less than satisfactory. Retaliation against administrators who are labeled anti-union or who discharge personnel, even where this occurs for reasons of incompetence, may cause these school officials to hesitate to deal resolutely with personnel problems related to ineffective performance.

SECTION 4:
THE PERSONNEL EFFECTIVENESS PLANNING PROCESS: A MODEL

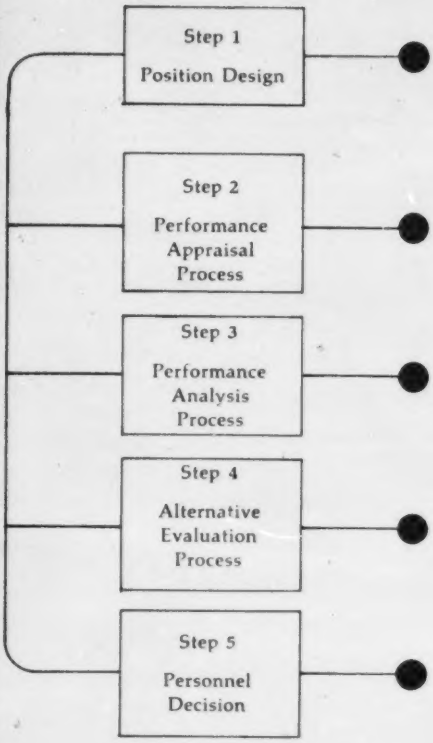
The preceding sections of this text have dealt with the significance, characteristics, and sources generally associated with ineffective performance. The discussion which follows focuses upon a planning process which may be employed by a school system to deal with performance problems. The model of personnel effectiveness planning process illustrated in Figure 3 has been developed as a frame of reference for thorough analysis of actual position performance, causes associated with various types of less than satisfactory performance, and training or other influences which might be more appropriate to achieve satisfactory resolution of personnel problems. Examination of the elements shown in the model indicate that in some respects they are similar to and in others different from those generally included in contemporary performance appraisal systems. The focus of the model shown in Figure 3, it should be noted, is on ineffective performance and plans by which this condition may be minimized within the system.

STEP 1: POSITION DESIGN

What we discuss here must be considered in light of several key observations made earlier in the text about factors which contribute to ineffective performance. The reader will recall the discussion of the various dimensions of the role an individual occupies and its relation to successful performance. One of these dimensions, role expectation, is critical to any discussion on developing plans for dealing with ineffective performance in a school system. What the occupant of a position is expected to do becomes important in at least two respects: a) the kind of responsibilities which inhere in each position enables the individual and his superior to develop plans for achieving the role expectations; and b) the expectations provide guidelines by which to judge whether the individual is achieving the standards set for the position. In effect, clarity in the design of the position is absolutely essential if the system expects the individual to perform effectively. Consequently, the organization needs to review periodically each position in the organization to:

- Identify and describe the title and general purpose of the position (its relation to unit objectives and system mission), specific duties and responsibilities, accountability and authority, reporting relationship (position to which it reports and positions reporting to).[12]
- Establish position standards (which specify the results which will occur when the performance is considered acceptable).

[12] Position guides are illustrated and discussed in Max S. Wortman, Jr., and Joann Sperling, *Defining the Manager's Job* (New York: American Management Associations, 1975).



The first step in the performance effectiveness planning process is to clarify questions such as the following: Why is the position needed? What is the position's unique contribution to the school? What authority and responsibility does the position have? What does the organization manual say about the position? Have the general output requirements of the position been established? The specific output requirements and the measurement criteria (effectiveness standards)? Step 1 is not focused upon individuals, but rather upon position role, especially results anticipated.

The purpose of step 2 is to *identify* those individuals in the system who are in the process of becoming ineffective performers. The human resources *information system* of the school system is searched for judgments, reports, facts, observations, critical incidents, evaluations, grievances, and recruitment and selection information to provide a data base to utilize in testing failure hypotheses.

This step focuses on the identification of the factors which have combined to produce individual performance failure. Failure hypotheses are developed and tested against the performance data base compiled for each ineffective performer (Step 2).

Decision is made on the basis of information compiled in previous steps to *outplace* the individual (resignation, termination, retirement) or to *initiate* a development program to improve his effectiveness.

The sequence of actions to be carried out in order to remove from the system or to improve the effectiveness of the individual performer. Among the possibilities for improvement are these: transfer of work, transfer of personnel, temporary assignments, special tasks, discipline, counseling, medical treatment, modification of existing personnel plans, position rotation, position enlargement, position enrichment, position sharing.

Figure 3. Model of the Performance Effectiveness Planning Process

- Make certain that the criteria have been clarified for judging to what extent the expectations have been achieved.
- Communicate to all parties concerned the function of the position, the actual results to be achieved, and the means by which progress of the position holder can be measured and monitored. The individual will quickly become demotivated, for example, if he is employed under one position design but must perform under an entirely different set of position conditions.

Students of administration suggest that the foundation of position design is the prescription of *effectiveness areas*[13] or *key results areas.*[14] In order to illustrate the meaning of effectiveness areas, let us examine a set related to the principalship. The effectiveness or key results areas are associated with major functions of the principalship such as:

- Goal Structure
- Organization Structure
- Educational Program
- Student Personnel
- Staff Personnel
- Support Services
- External Relations
- Evaluation

Key results areas, such as those identified above for the principalship, indicate "the critical few" areas in which priority effort should be directed. They represent areas within which activities and results will occur. Within the key results areas, specific objectives can then be established and programmed. One of the key results areas listed above for the principalship is "evaluation." This key results area can be then converted into specific objectives such as:

> The principal assesses the needs of the school unit and evaluates the processes and products of instruction in order to improve instruction.

In order to make the above objective even more specific, time-bounded, and measurable it could be stated as follows:

> The principal will collect, organize, analyze and interpret data concerning the performance of students.

A further division of this statement might read like this:

> The principal will make by June 30, 19__, a systematic study of discipline referrals, their causes, and the teachers involved, and use the results in planning constructive programs with teachers to deal with the causes.

It is manifest that not all of the foregoing content will appear in a position guide. The point of emphasis, however, is that the use of effective-

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[13] W. J. Reddin, *Effective Management by Objectives* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1971), Parts 2 and 3.

[14] George L. Morrisey, *Management by Objectives and Results in the Public Sector* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1976), Chapter 4.

ness or key results areas can be employed in a management-by-objectives program which focuses upon results to be achieved for each position in the system.

Before proceeding to a discussion of the second step in the performance effectiveness planning model, it is worth noting also that any comprehensive review of system positions will take into consideration whether or not the position is actually needed, whether it can be eliminated, and whether work assigned to it can be reassigned to other positions. The system needs also to take note of the extent to which the work assigned to the position is meaningful. Is the work conducive to a sense of meaninglessness and boredom to personnel? Various new approaches to position design are being employed, such as rotation, enlargement, individualized reward systems, and enrichment. If the role of the principal is conceived to be custodial, disciplinary, and managerially oriented, for example, what is the motivational impact of this position design on the incumbent? Is the design obsolescent? There are numbers of ways in which human organizations and the positions therein can be more constructively arranged. Lawler notes in this connection that "many researchers have shown that the way jobs are designed has a strong impact on the degree of employee motivation. The task employees are given, how performance is measured, and how feedback about the results of performances is handled all affect 'intrinsic' or internal motivation. To be motivating, a job must be designed to fit the values and needs of the people performing it."[15]

STEP 2: PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

One of the basic assumptions of the personnel effectiveness planning model portrayed in Figure 3 is that ineffective performance can be identified if: a) role expectations are clearly prescribed; and b) the system has designed and utilized an effective performance appraisal process to determine to what extent each individual is achieving the results indicated in the position standards and objectives. The following discussion deals with performance *appraisal* and *identification* of unsatisfactory performance, guidelines for administrative action, and development of the individual information base for *performance analysis*.

Identification. Early identification of ineffective performance is important to all organizations, but especially critical to educational institutions in the public sector prior to granting tenure to individual system members. One of the key elements in any program designed to minimize performance

[15] Edward E. Lawler, III, "Developing a Motivating Work Climate," *Management Review* 66, 7 (July, 1977), 26, 38.

ineffectiveness is a functioning performance appraisal system. This observation can be buttressed by the records of numerous court decisions ruling that charges of ineffective performance could not be sustained because of insufficient documentation. Allegations of ineffectiveness against any individual are serious matters. Such assertions or declarations require substantiation before the organization takes action against one of its members. The soundest approach to identification of performance ineffectiveness is a modern performance appraisal process. Such a process is long-range, systematic, system-wide, perpetual, and subject to constant monitoring and modification.[16] It includes an early identification procedure in the form of an evaluation interview such as the one illustrated in Figure 4.

Guidelines for Administration Action. A system-wide, systematic, logical, detailed plan for dealing with ineffective performance in a school system must be workable and practical. It must encompass plans and tools that are readily usable and that will produce results sooner rather than later. If the plan is to receive enthusiastic cooperation and support during implementation it must:

- Encompass centralized plans for administering all aspects of ineffective performance—from early identification to actions involving outplacement or individual improvement.
- Provide sufficient how-to details and guides to ensure its understanding and ease of implementation. This includes the development of a workable performance appraisal system, specific instructions about arrangements for documenting ineffective performance, and what constructive steps should be taken to correct behavior of persons who do not meet expectations or organizational conditions conducive to ineffective behavior. Guidelines will include organization manuals, forms, worksheets, examples, report plans, and supporting directions for administrators responsible for appraising personnel performance.
- Include an information system through which data relating to any individual in the organization are collected, refined, stored and retrieved readily (see Figure 5).
- Plans for training all administrative personnel involved in the appraisal process about the operational aspects of their duties, responsibilities, and authorities.

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[16] References describing the performance appraisal process include William B. Castetter, *The Personnel Function in Educational Administration* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1976); and George B. Redfern, *How to Evaluate Teaching: A Performance Objectives Approach* (Worthington, Ohio, School Management Institute, Inc., 1972); Borich, Gary D., *The Appraisal of Teaching: Concepts and Process* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1977).

Appraisee Name	*Position Title*	*Time In This Position*	*Date Employed*	*Latest Appraisal*
Singlaub, Morgan T.	Social Studies Teacher	2 yrs. 2 mos.	9-1-76 to present	4-1-78

Location of Position	*Appraiser*	*Time Under Appraiser's Supervision*
Ball Senior High School	Spencer B. Myers	From 9-1-77 to *Present*

Purpose of Evaluation Interview. Three types of information indicate that Mr. Singlaub is having difficulty meeting the requirements of the position to which he has been assigned. These sources of information include: 1) reports from social studies supervisor to the principal (1-1-78); 2) complaints, both written and oral, from parents to principal; 3) recorded observations of principal concerning performance problems of Mr. Singlaub. Purpose of interview is to: 1) apprise Mr. Singlaub of the performance problems perceived by others; 2) determine what the causes of ineffective performance are; and 3) decide what can be done to deal with causes so that performance will improve.

Perceptions of Performance Problems (Mr. Singlaub). Of the five major roles of a teacher in the Middletown School System: a) instructional leader; b) social interaction leader; c) promoter of healthful emotional development; d) communicator with parents and colleagues; e) professional educator; Mr. Singlaub has been judged in each role to be less than satisfactory. Mr. Singlaub contends that the appraisal process is not valid. He believes the judgments about him in the categories listed above are too harsh, that he has been observed insufficiently to measure his true performance ability.

Perceptions of Performance Problems (Principal). Teacher does not adjust instructional techniques to readiness levels of pupils; does not individualize instruction where appropriate; does not react sympathetically to pupil problems; does not encourage independent pupil behavior; does not communicate information and suggestions to parents and colleages about intellectual, social, and emotional development of pupils; does not appear to be interested nor assume responsibilities in system other than teaching assignment; classes not stimulating, student interest appears low; poor learning environment in classroom; instructional pattern seldom changes; little pupil participation; same content and activities planned for all students; knowledge of subject needs improving; teaching plans seem vague; little evidence of sufficient preplanning; evaluation results not used purposefully; attendance register returned for correction 6 times.

Perceptions of Seriousness of Performance Problems. Some parents have requested that their children be transferred to other sections of social studies classes; other parents have written to members of the board of education requesting Mr. Singlaub's dismissal. Situation appears to be getting worse as rumors spread about conditions in Mr. Singlaub's classroom. Joint administrative committee reviewing the information about Mr. Singlaub agree that seriousness of situation should be brought formally to his attention, including the consequences of failure to improve his performance.

Interview Reaction of Mr. Singlaub. While Mr. Singlaub does not agree with the estimates and observations of his performance as a classroom teacher, he recognizes that there is considerable insistence, both internally and externally, to modify his behavior so that the role expectations as outlined above will be achieved.

Problem Agreement: Mr. Singlaub has reviewed the information (reports from supervisor; parent and pupil complaints; and recorded observations of the principal). Mr. Singlaub's reaction to the evaluation information is that his performance discrepancy as viewed by others is a serious matter; whether he agrees with the information is immaterial, he states. He will agree to develop a performance plan in cooperation with the principal to improve areas of weakness.

Alternatives: Transfer, dismiss immediately, change skill level, change what is required of him.

Action Agreement: Change skill level.

Personnel Development Plan

A. *Performance Targets:* 1) improve mastery of subject; 2) improve preplanning; 3) improve teaching style.

B. *Plans to Achieve Performance Targets:* a) will attend seminars held weekly for beginning teachers wherein system provides consultants to assist new staff members with teaching problems; b) will engage in extensive study program to improve mastery of subject; c) will observe models of effective teaching.

C. *Progress Review Date:* (principal and subordinate) three months.

D. *Expectations:* Marked progress in meeting performance targets outlined above.

Figure 4. Evaluation Conference for Early Identification and Communication of Ineffective Performance

1. Basic information kept by system on all personnel.
2. Recorded information relating to performance evaluation of individual.
3. Current reports on work plans and progress reviews.
4. Pertinent information relating to position compensation, position guide, position standards.
5. Information about individual as viewed by others.
6. Performance history.
7. Significant incidents indicative of effective or ineffective behavior.

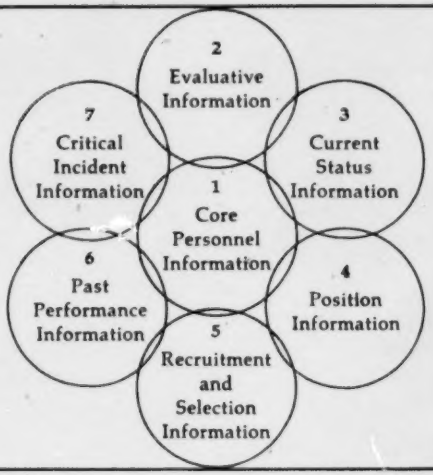


Figure 5. Individual Information Base for Performance Analysis

The essence of the foregoing observations is focused on these hypotheses: a) identification of personnel ineffectiveness is a judgmental matter; b) accurate information is basic to sound judgments; c) a systematic appraisal process is essential to gathering accurate information for use in deliberations on ineffective performance; d) the key to making the right decisions about people is to have accurate facts, data, and observations on which those decisions can be based.

Individual Information Profile. If the assumption is correct that the resolution of problems relating to ineffective performance depends heavily on information gathered about each individual's position performance, then it follows that development of a personnel information system is an organizational requisite. Figure 5 has been included to illustrate the interdependent, integrated, and comprehensive nature of a personnel information system which can be utilized to deal with problems relating to identification of performance ineffectiveness, as well as to the analysis of factors relating to this condition. Commentary on each of the information elements shown in Figure 5 is contained in the text following.

Core Personnel Information. Every organization has some form of personnel data system, the nature of which will depend upon such variables as city, county, state, federal laws; system personnel practices, and union contract agreements. Moreover, the utilization of computers has enabled systems to gather personnel data in each of these broad areas: a) personnel records containing basic employee data, and status and progress of employees; b) wage and salary applications; c) skills inventory; d) employ-

ment, including recruitment and selection information. Comments of teachers and professors, personal interview data, comments of former associates, former subordinates, appraisal records, and development records are included in this category.

Evaluative Information. This component of a human resources information system includes any information relating to evaluations made of the individual's actual or potential performance. Performance appraisal summaries, progress reports, performance evaluation feedback to position incumbent, documentations of individual behavior, appraisal of talent and motivation, personal history analysis, recommended actions, promotion appraisal, self-evaluations, salary appraisal, performance deficiencies, performance improvement appraisal, and critical incidents are illustrative items in this category.

Current Status Information. Information relating to the individual's performance in the position he now occupies is the focus of this category of individual information. This includes the position guide, documents indicating what the individual commits himself to accomplish and what in fact he accomplishes, work in progress, list of assignments, and personnel accomplishment summary.

Position Information. Documentation of the role expectations and internal situational factors that may affect individual's ability to perform his work effectively.

Recruitment and Selection Information. Perceptions of external and internal personnel relative to strengths and weaknesses observed about individual's past performance and future potential.

Past Performance Information. Pre-employment checks, previous personnel records, evaluation by former superiors, previous self-appraisals, past annotated accomplishment reports, past performance evaluation forms, and notes on previous favorable and unfavorable performance.

Critical Incidents. Past or present behavioral incident reports relating to effective or ineffective behavior of individual.

Summary. As noted throughout the foregoing discussion, administrators in contemporary society are called upon to make a variety of appraisals about individuals in their employ. The time to make decisions about ineffective performance is hardly the time to begin to collect information related to such action. Information from the sources mentioned above must be collected over a period time, during which there is opportunity to update, review, reflect, analyze, and weigh its significance in relation to each individual decision concerning individual performance. In the discussion which

follows consideration will be given to *performance analysis—the search for explanations of why people do not perform according to expectations.*

STEP 3: PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

Performance analysis is defined as the process of identifying the factor or combination of factors associated with ineffective performance. This process is considered *to extend beyond the performance appraisal process* in that it is designed to examine the reasons underlying position failure. The core element in performance analysis is the establishment of a series of *failure hypotheses*, checking each against what information is available about the individual, then accepting or rejecting each in turn.[17] Figure 6 has been included to clarify the concept of performance analysis. The model shown below is conceived to be a process within the framework of the performance effectiveness planning model (Figure 3, Step 3).

Effectiveness Indicators. Examination of the process outlined in Figure 6 indicates that the first sequence of activities is focused upon indicators dealing with these questions: Who are the individuals who are not meeting role expectations? What indicators have been employed to determine personnel ineffectiveness? What do they indicate about performance results, and in what areas are there reasons to believe performance problems exist? Two forms are fundamental to securing information for dealing with the foregoing questions; the position review form (Figure 7), and the performance progress review form (Figure 8). These forms document what the individual *commits himself to do* in the form of performance targets and what *he in fact accomplishes.* To these basic indicators may be added whatever other information is needed or pertinent to identification of performance failure. Two matters are of prime consideration: a) a review of performance effectiveness is focused solely on whether or not the individual is meeting position expectations; b) a personnel file is essential for each individual in which documents are stored and which contain information about performance results in relation to performance standards.

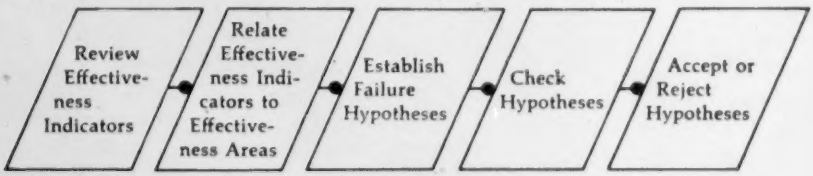


Figure 6. Model of the Performance Analysis Process

[17] John B. Miner, *Personnel and Industrial Relations: A Managerial Approach* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969), 417.

Effectiveness Areas. In the preceding text it was noted that a useful approach to planning individual performance targets and diagnosing the problems relating to personnel failure is effectiveness or key results *areas*. Delineation of effectiveness areas helps to pinpoint performance problems, especially when they can be linked to the indicators noted previously. Table 4 has been included to illustrate the second phase of the performance analysis process outlined in Figure 6. By relating effectiveness *areas* to effectiveness *indicators* the system is able to determine more accurately where the individual performance problems are located. It is worth repeating here that this approach is possible only when the system has carefully prepared position guides designating effectiveness areas and has initiated a performance appraisal system which documents results against expectations.

Failure Hypotheses. Table 5 portrays a matrix designed to illustrate how a diagnostic tool can be developed for probing personnel failure by linking failure hypotheses to effectiveness areas. The primary purpose of the matrix is to assist the organization in identifying the *factors contributing to failure* and the *specific areas of responsibility in which it is occurring*. In effect, the individual who is charged with diagnosing personnel failure seeks to find out exactly which among the individual, organizational, and environmental factors are playing a causal role. Each of the failure hypotheses in Table 5 is checked against the information which has been gathered about the individual performer and is either accepted or rejected. Establishment of failure hypotheses is the third phase of the performance analysis process outlined in Figure 6. The main purpose of these failure hypotheses is to provide the investigator with three failure analysis categories, each containing sub-categories, and each a potential base from which factors which play a causal role in performance failure can be traced.

TABLE 4
ILLUSTRATION OF LINKAGE BETWEEN EFFECTIVENESS AREAS AND EFFECTIVENESS INDICATORS

Effectiveness Areas Of The Principalship	Performance Problem Areas	Documents Relating Effectiveness Areas To Effectiveness Indicators
Goal Integration	X	Forms 21 A, B, C—Personnel File
Curriculum and Instruction		
Personnel Function		
Student Personnel Services		
Funds and Facilities		
External Relations		
Evaluation	X	Report of Asst. Supt. 5/2/78

1. *Appraisee*
Title of Position _____
Position Location _____ Central Administration _____ Attendance Unit _____
Reports to (Give Position to Which This Position Reports) _____
Nature of Responsibility: Line ___ Staff _____
No. of Professional Staff Reporting to Position ___
No. of Supportive Staff Reporting to Position ___
Incumbent _____ Age ___
Education
B.A. from _____ Year _____
M.A. from _____ Year _____
Doctorate from _____ Year _____

Professional Experience
Years of Professional Experience 19__ to 19__
Years of Teaching Experience 19__ to 19__
Years of Administrative Experience 19__ to 19__
Previous Administrative Positions 19__ to 19__
_____ 19__ to 19__
_____ 19__ to 19__

2. *Appraiser*
Title of Position _____ Position Location _____
Name of Incumbent _____ Dates of Quarterly Reviews ___ ___ ___ ___

3. *Position*
If position is in central administration indicate which of the following major organization functions with which it is chiefly concerned: Ed. program _____ Logistics _____ Manpower _____
External relations _____ Planning _____
If position is at attendance unit (building) level indicate the following:
Pupil-Teacher Ratio _____
Pupil-Professional Staff Ratio _____
Client Composition _____
Pupil Mobility _____
Socioeconomic Level _____
Faculty Preparation _____
Faculty Experience _____
% Non-English Speaking Pupils _____
Types of Special Programs (Non-Systemwide)

4. Common Position Dimensions	With which of the following common position dimensions is performance target primarily associated? Systems Dimension ___ Leadership Dimension ___ Human Resources Dimension ___
5. Performance Target	a. What specific performance condition needs to be improved to achieve the performance target? Priority No. _____ b. Is this performance target focused upon: Routine Objective _____ Problem-Solving Objective _____ Innovative Objective _____
6. Appraisal Method	How will appraiser judge when performance target has been reached? By what means?

7. Performance Target Action Plan (What is the plan of action? What steps are to be taken to achieve performance target?)	Performance Target Activity Serial Number	Performance Target Activity	Planned Date of Completion	Date Activity Completed
	1.0	What does appraisee do to move from the present condition to future condition (target)? What specific steps must be taken and in what order?		
	1.1			
	1.2			
	1.3			
	1.4			

8. Performance Results	To what extent was the performance target (not the program of activities) actually achieved? Appraiser _____ Appraisee _____ Date _____

Copies: (1) Appraiser. (2) Appraisee. (3) Camelot School System Central Personnel File.

Figure 7. Illustration of Position Review Form
1-3: Position Record Sheet. 4-8: Performance Target Record Form.

Section A. Summarize the overall strengths that you have demonstrated in performing your present assignment.

Section B. Do you feel that you are well placed in your present assignment? If not, please explain.

Section C. In what areas of your present assignment or in the way you perform your present assignment do you think you can improve your performance?

Section D. Do you feel that you have potential beyond your present assignment? How have you demonstrated this potential? What can you suggest as your next assignment?

Section E. Are there significant facts you think should be noted about the dimensions of your position that affect your performance which you think should be brought to the attention of your superior, such as:

Unit Objectives
Position Design
Human, Technical, Conceptual Skills of Administrator
Social Setting
Administrative and Operational Processes
Results Achieved

Section F. How effectively do you feel you have met the responsibilities of your position?

Signature of Appraisee _____ *Date* _____

Figure 8. Performance Progress Review Form

Testing the Hypotheses. The fourth phase of the performance analysis process outlined in Figure 6 involves checking the failure hypotheses against information contained in the file of each individual performer. The sources of information against which the hypotheses are checked have been outlined in Figure 5. In effect, the model illustrated in Figure 6 is verbally rather than quantitatively oriented and stresses cause and effect relationships. In order to test the hypotheses which have been developed, the investigator utilizing the model suggested in Figure 5 might proceed as follows:

- Review the file of the ineffective performer to locate clues, accomplishment inventories, symptoms, indicators, estimates, opinions, judgments, analyses, development opportunities, effects, or other

TABLE 5
MATRIX ILLUSTRATING LINKAGE OF EFFECTIVENESS AREAS AND FAILURE HYPOTHESES FOR DIAGNOSING PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

Failure Hypotheses	Effectiveness Areas* 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	n
A. INDIVIDUAL									
Intellectual Impairment									
Psychological Impairment									
Physiological Impairment									
Demotivation									
Personality Factors									
Obsolescence									
Position Preparation									
Values and Beliefs									
B. THE ORGANIZATION									
The System									
The Role									
The Group									
Supervisory Behavior									
Organizational Climate									
C. THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT									
The Family									
Economic Conditions									
Political Conditions									
Legal Considerations									
Societal Values									
Labor Market									
Changing Technology									
Unions									

* The illustrative numbers above represent the effectiveness areas which are contained in the individual's position guide. The number of areas will vary among positions in the system, and depend upon the system's view of those activities in the position in which the incumbent should be investing his or her time, energy, and talents.

The failure hypotheses represent factors which may be associated with position failure. The information gathered in the previous steps of the process will be useful in linking a failure hypothesis to an effectiveness area(s). Experience indicates that position failure is not usually attributed to a single cause, nor ineffectiveness confined to a single area.

leads which will help to pinpoint the immediate performance situation of the person under consideration.

- Try to identify cause-effect relationships within the individual situation. (See Figure 9.) Ask pointed questions about whether the cause of the failure has individual, organizational, or environmental roots. If, for example, an individual teacher is not achieving role expectations, one might raise appropriate questions such as the following to become informed about the nature of the performance problems: What is the nature of the ineffective performance as described in the individual's file? What causes are attributed to the failure? Are the causal factors specific so that other observers can review the teaching behavior? Are the reasons clear why the indi-

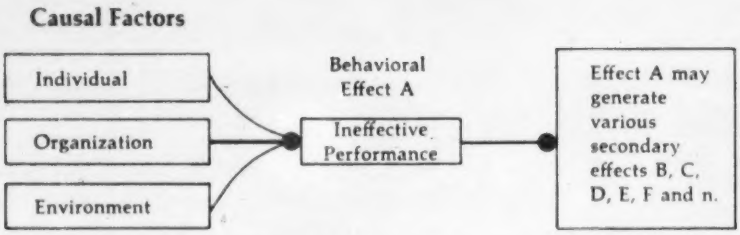


Figure 9. Cause-Effect Relationships in Performance Analysis

vidual has not been meeting his commitments? Is there a consensus among observers as to primary cause or causes?

- Check the information available to identify secondary behavioral effects which may be generated by the primary effect (ineffective performance), see Figure 9.
- Attempt to confirm tentative conclusions reached about the factors contributing to ineffective behavior by a series of interviews with the individual wherein additional questions are asked about the failure hypotheses and their relationship to his performance.
- Similarly, a conference might be held wherein officials review the information at hand, check it against the failure hypotheses, and attempt to pinpoint factors clearly associated with the performance under consideration.

The importance of cause-effect relationships in making decisions about an individual's future cannot be overlooked. Greater understanding of the cause-effect relationships can produce insights into an individual's behavior, constitute a basis for retaining personnel in or removing them from the system, provide information on which to act regarding factors in the system which are constraints to effective performance, and guide the selection of objectives to improve the performance of persons deemed to be salvageable.

Testing Failure Hypotheses. Having collected information now on (a) effectiveness indicators, (b) effectiveness areas, and (c) failure hypotheses as portrayed in the performance analysis model (Figure 6), evaluators can now begin the important task of checking each hypothesis against what is known about the individual, then deciding which should be accepted and which rejected. The checking of each hypothesis against available data is basic to the personnel decision process, as illustrated in Figure 10. In order

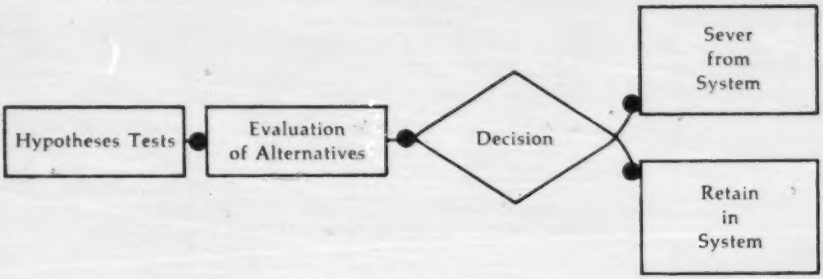


Figure 10. Relationship of Hypotheses Testing to Personnel Decision On Ineffective Performers

to document the method employed and the judgments reached about the causes contributing to performance ineffectiveness of an individual, a worksheet similar to the one illustrated in Table 6 may be utilized. Hypotheses analysis, it should be noted, is affected by how orderly and how systematically it proceeds. This is to say that the plan of the analysis should be so designed that the effects of power, sympathy, bias, group pressure, and authority are minimized. Fundamental to arriving at appropriate judgments about each of the hypotheses is a check of all of the information for bias, and for errors in judgment about the causes of failure. Hypothesis testing is the system's way of attempting to perceive why the individual's performance is x when it should be y. In attempting to find a solution to the reasons for the performance gap, the evaluator will need to keep in mind that there may be multiple causes obscuring the important underlying one; that the cause may appear to be so unrelated to the effect that the disparity may make it difficult to associate the two factors; that perceptions of ineffective performance are likely to be more subjective than objective; that appraisal of reasons why people behave as they do are based on judgments subject to a wide variety of human errors. We can assume, for example, that much of the information gathered about the hypothetical principal in Table 6 is reliable. We cannot assume, however, that the failure hypotheses shown in Table 6 are the real causes of the performance effects. Only through the collection of appropriate data and sound interpretation of their meaning can the evaluator have confidence that he has identified what the performance problem is, its fundamental character, its critical elements, and its boundaries. Efforts are focused upon identifying as accurately as possible which individual, organizational, and environmental elements or combination thereof have played a causal role. In the text which follows we shall assume that the hypotheses check has confirmed the nature of the problem and the key factors associated therewith. Its solution will depend, as discussed in the next section, upon the identification and evaluation of alternatives.

TABLE 6
PROFILE OF A PERFORMANCE PROBLEM

A. The Performance Problem

The Goodville School System annually appraises the performance of all personnel on the payroll. Performance records indicate that James Gavin, principal of the Fawn Grove Elementary School, has not been achieving performance standards. Mr. Gavin is 55 years of age, tenured, holder of a master's degree, in the system 20 years, in the position 13 years.

B. Effectiveness Areas

Purpose of Position: To advocate, develop, execute, and assess the results plans designed to facilitate growth and development of pupil personnel assigned to this attendance unit.

Effectiveness Areas: Goal structure, school organization, curriculum development, instructional improvement, student personnel, staff personnel, support services, external relations, evaluation.

C. Performance Problem Areas

Effectiveness Areas	Performance Gaps	No Performance Gaps
1 Goal Structure	X	
2. Organizational Structure		X
3. Curriculum	X	
4. Instruction	X	
5. Student Personnel	X	
6. Staff Personnel	X	
7. External Relations	X	
8. Evaluation	X	

D. Performance Effects (Symptoms)

- High staff turnover.
- School does not attract, retain key personnel.
- High percentage of students not achieving expectations.
- Parents lack interest in school.
- Spends excessive time in office administration.
- Plans for staff development lacking.

E. Failure Hypotheses (Causes or Conditional Forces)

- Leadership skills inadequate for role.
- Leadership style alienates subordinates.
- Values and beliefs affect performance negatively.
- Role perception, obsolescence affect work focus.
- Demotivation not conducive to achievement of position expectations.

F. Summary: Officials of the Goodville School System have concluded that Mr. Gavin does not have the critical combination of abilities, attitudes, and motivation to perform the principalship effectively. Performance in current position not satisfactory considering time in position: a) does not identify problems quickly nor reach well-reasoned conclusions which lead to action. Repeats mistakes and waits to be told. Does not look for better ways to improve in effectiveness areas. Does not assume a leading role, set high goals, effectively motivate others to get results. Does not identify with the system's goals. Does not relate well to those above, below, and around him. Does not facilitate work efforts of subordinates.

STEP 4: EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Following the hypotheses checking process, how does the system evaluate the alternatives it has identified? How does it decide on which alternative to choose in solving the problem of what to do about an individual who is adjudged to be ineffective in the performance of the position to which he has been assigned. As illustrated in Figure 10, there are two major alternatives involved in dealing with the problems of performer ineffectiveness—severance or retention. The calibre of the final decision will depend to a considerable extent on the quality of the criteria employed to make the decision and their application in weighing the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative.

Table 7 and Figure 11 have been designed to illustrate a decision matrix which can be applied in the search for an appropriate solution to ineffective performance. The decision criteria in Table 7 are grouped into three major categories—individual, organizational, and environmental. Each criterion is not given the same weight; the intent is to compel the evaluator to be systematic in analyzing available information on each of the criteria and judging its significance in terms of the selection of the appropriate alternative.

It is worth noting that the choice matrix illustrated in Table 7 is a tool, a kind of decision crucible in which ineffective performance is put to a searching test. It will not make the decision process error free. Its use will not guarantee elimination of subjective preferences even when a more objective choice is possible. Judgments about what should be done regarding ineffective performers involve human propensities, including biases, sympathy, and strong social pressures in the contemporary world both in and outside of the system against severing people from their employment, regardless of the quality of their performance. What the choice matrix will do, on the other hand, is to enable system evaluators to conceptualize what is involved in making a personnel decision of the kind under consideration, the nature and importance of the criteria which enter into the decision, and the significance of a comprehensive information system and its application in the decision crucible.

STEP 5: THE PERSONNEL DECISION

The final step in the performance effectiveness planning process, portrayed in the Figure 3 model, is a choice of alternatives. The consequences of the choice, insofar as a personnel action plan is involved, are outlined in Figure 12. If option 1 is chosen as the solution, it involves at least three sub-options; if option 2 is selected as the most satisfactory solution, several possibilities are available by which the decision can be implemented. Each

TABLE 7
DECISION MATRIX FOR PERSONNEL ACTION ON INEFFECTIVE PERFORMERS

	Significance		Weight*	Impact		Total	
	Is the factor of significance in making this decision? (Insert 1 in appropriate column)		How heavily should the factor weigh in making the decision? (Assign weight of 1 to 4)	Does consideration of the factor enhance (+) or detract from (−) the individual's worth to system?		Weighted significance (Significance × weight × influence)	
Decision Criteria	(A) Yes	(B) No	(C) 1-4	(D) +	(E) −	(A X C X D) +	(A X C X D) −
I. INDIVIDUAL							
A. Performance Record in Present Position	1		4		−		4
B. Performance Potential	1		4	+		4	
C. Receptivity to Performance Improvement	1		4		−		4
D. Adequacy of Professional Qualifications	1		4		−		4
E. Commitment to System	1		1		−		1
F. Work Motivation		1					
G. Length of Service	1		1		−		1
H. Corrective Measures Worth Probable Results	1		4	+		4	
I. Cruciality of Individual's Skills	1		4		−		4
II. ORGANIZATIONAL							
J. Consequences of Decision to System		1					
K. Position Requirements		1					
L. Superior-Subordinate Relationships	1		4		−		4
M. Organizational Investment		1					
N. Position Constraints Within System		1					
O. Cruciality of Excellence	1		4		−		4
III. ENVIRONMENTAL							
P. Community Situational Factors	1		4	+		4	
Q. Governmental Constraints (tenure, etc.)	1		4	+		4	
TOTALS (Convert totals to position sign)						Total A = 16	Total B = 26
Summation (A minus B = Personnel Action Index)						Total A minus B = −10	

*Weights are assigned as follows:
1. Factor is of marginal significance in assessing the value of the individual to the organization.
2. Factor is important enough to contribute jointly with other factors in making an assessment of the incumbent's worth.
3. Factor is a key indicator of the value of the position incumbent.
4. Factor is crucial to any decision regarding retention of the position incumbent.

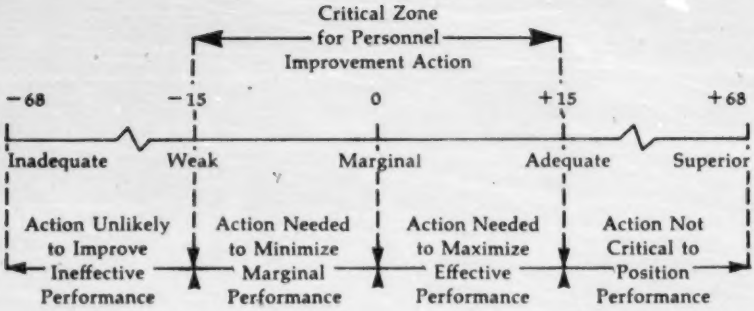


Figure 11. Guidelines for Retention/Dismissal Decision Utilizing Results Derived From Application of Decision Matrix (Table 7)

of the two major options and the sub-options related to each will be explored in the text following.

Option 1: System Retains Incumbent

Of the three possible courses of action which can be taken if a decision is made to retain the incumbent, certainly the possibility of restoring an individual to a satisfactory level of performance cannot be overlooked. Let us explore below the problems and potential consequences of retaining the incumbent in his present position.

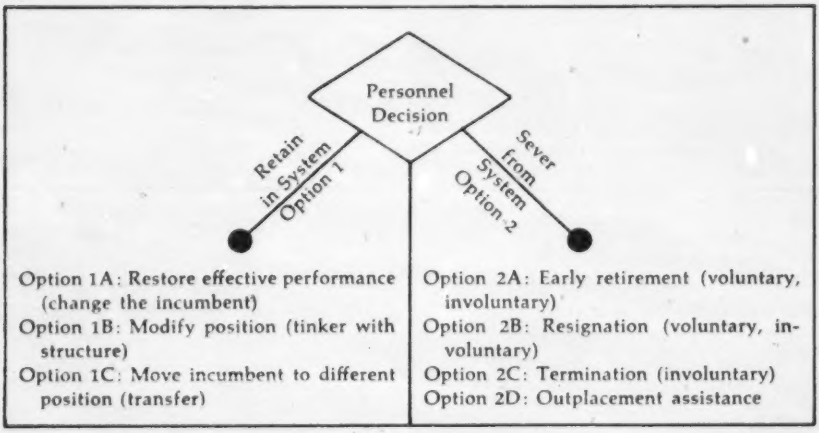

Personnel Decision
Retain in System Option 1
Sever from System Option 2
Option 1A: Restore effective performance (change the incumbent)
Option 1B: Modify position (tinker with structure)
Option 1C: Move incumbent to different position (transfer)
Option 2A: Early retirement (voluntary, involuntary)
Option 2B: Resignation (voluntary, involuntary)
Option 2C: Termination (involuntary)
Option 2D: Outplacement assistance

Figure 12. Model for Evaluation of Alternative Personnel Solutions

Changing the Incumbent. In deciding whether or not to attempt to restore the individual to a satisfactory level of performance, we should answer several questions carefully. These include the following: Is it conceivable that the individual under consideration can be restored to a satisfactory level of performance? If the system agrees upon corrective measures, are they worth the probable results? Is the performance problem related to a skill deficiency? If he does not now know how to carry out the requirements of the position, is there good reason to believe he can remove the deficiency fairly promptly? If the individual is able to perform and doesn't, is it possible to overcome the motivational problem involved? Are his present skills adequate for the desired performance? Does he have the potential to benefit from an individual development program? If the problem is not a skill deficiency, what are the roots of the nonperformance problem? Can the performance impediments or obstacles be removed? Is the individual now being rewarded for non-performance? Are there elements in organizational plans (*e.g.*, inequity in pay plans) or policies which, if changed, would help to restore effective performance? Will the position environment permit behavior modification of the individual? Will retraining contribute to improvement in the individual's effectiveness areas? As the foregoing questions illustrate, the decision process is not complete even when the final decision has been made.

The list of questions also indicates that there are no standard answers to problems associated with behavior modification. Because school officials have an obligation to achieve system goals, they will need to make independent analyses and detailed studies of questions relating to implementing a personnel decision. The questions are focused not only on the best rather than merely a satisfactory solution, but also on a systematic plan of action which will be discussed subsequently.

Changing the Position. The second sub-option listed in Figure 12 is position modification. This is to say that if the work requirements of the position are changed or rearranged in some way, the individual might be able to perform effectively. Some of the effective personnel practices included in this category are: a) transferring some of the work involved in the position to another position (reducing position responsibilities); b) enlarging the role expectations (enlarging position responsibilities); c) position styling (modifying the position content which affords better position-person compatability); d) position enrichment (increasing level of difficulty or complexity of position whereby individual assumes more responsibility for planning and controlling work related to position). The foregoing approaches, it should be made clear, depend upon a number of factors which need to be considered before action is taken on implementation. The alternatives may be used singly, or in combination, or they may be part of a

personnel action plan to improve both the incumbent and the conditions under which he works.

Transfer. Moving the individual from a position in which he has performed ineffectively to one in which it is assumed he will be able to achieve position standards is a third sub-option suggested in Figure 12. Among the possibilities of this option are the following: a) transfer to a similar or to a different position at the same grade level within the same unit; b) to a similar or different position in a different unit; c) creating a position with a special assignment; d) creating a position with a temporary assignment; e) rotating positions; and f) transfer to another position involving promotion or demotion. To what extent any movement of an individual from one position to another will be conducive to improved performance is a matter of conjecture. Obstacles are frequently involved in this form of personnel action, including union contracts governing involuntary change in positions, resistance from administrators to whom the individual is to be assigned; and impact on the individual's compensation. The central purpose of the types of transfers under consideration is to place the individual in a role in which it is assumed he will be effective. Before a decision of this type is made, careful testing of the assumption that the individual will succeed is necessary. Unless the reasons for retention through transfer are highly convincing, and until the likely positive and negative impacts on the receiving unit are thoroughly explored, a transfer as a corrective measure should be initiated with caution.

Personnel Action Plan. Regardless of which option or combination of options is selected as the appropriate solution to the performance problem, the system implements the decision through a personnel action plan, the framework for which is outlined in Figure 13. The sequence of actions to be carried out for the individual who is to be retained in the system is similar in many respects to modern personnel approaches to encourage improved performance among all personnel. The first step in the individual development plan, as indicated in Figure 13, is to discuss the proposed plan of action with the incumbent. This method does not ensure the incumbent's acceptance of the plan, but it helps to place the problem in perspective. The individual is fully informed about the decision which has been reached and its importance to his career in the system. The model in Figure 13 indicates also that a work plan is developed by superior and subordinate, commitments to the plan are made by the incumbent, and specific activities are scheduled in the form of performance targets to be reached. Finally, progress is appraised and documented so as to assess the movement being made by the incumbent to achieve the results which are called for in the individual action plan. The periodic progress review is an essential ongoing performance control method whereby superior and subordinate can assess

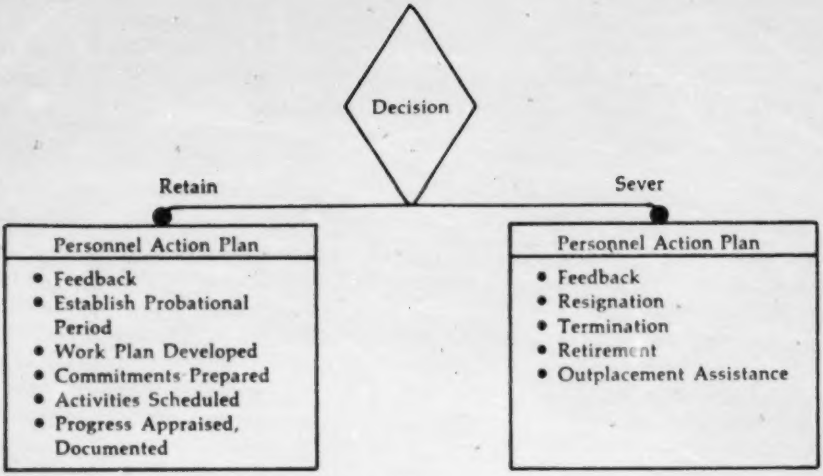


Figure 13. Model for Implementing Personnel Action Decision

performance in terms of what went well, where problems were encountered. It is a method of reinforcing the system's intentions of having each of its members perform according to plan.

Option 2: System Severs Incumbent

If the final decision of the system means that the individual will be severed from employment, several possibilities can be explored. As shown in Figure 13, these include early retirement (voluntary and involuntary), resignation, termination, and outplacement assistance. Above all, the system should move promptly to communicate the severance decision to the incumbent, and to explain the reasons and the background considerations which were examined in arriving at the course of action.

Early Retirement. When circumstances permit, the possibility of early retirement of personnel unable to perform up to standards should be examined. This is perhaps the least difficult of the severance options to implement, since it is a reasonable and socially acceptable way of severing people from the system when they are no longer able or willing to perform effectively. While it is clear that this option can be invoked infrequently, the point of emphasis is that a concatenation of events relating to a performance problem may make possible removal of personnel from the system through early retirement, either on a voluntary or involuntary basis.

Resignation. Strictly speaking, resignation means that the individual, of his own volition, decides to sever his employment relationship with the system. Sometimes referred to as "dehiring," the typical approach to resig-

nation when ineffective performance is the problem is for the organization to encourage the individual by subtle suggestions or actions to terminate his employment voluntarily. There are advantages to both the individual and to the system in using resignation as an alternative approach to personnel separation. For the individual it is a more graceful way of exiting from the system than being discharged involuntarily. Moreover, this alternative is not likely to detract from his opportunities for other employment. For the organization, it lessens the likelihood of internal and perhaps external conflict, an occurrence which is generally anticipated when a member of the system is actually fired. Resignation covers up to some extent the organization's failure in selection, in placement, and in personnel development. Resignation, it would appear, places the blame for performance failure on the individual and not the system. Further, resignation does not affect the system's personnel discharge records, and does not detract from its public image as a place where the individual can work in a climate of security.

Whether the individual decides to resign of his own volition, or whether he is encouraged to do so by the system, a formal resignation procedure is essential. This includes a signed letter of resignation by the employee, provisions for adequate notice as to the official date of effective resignation, and a letter from the system to the individual formally accepting the resignation.

Dismissal. A personnel termination (commonly referred to as firing, discharge, severance, dismissal, separation, or dislocation) is an action initiated by the school system. It is the harshest form of action which the system can direct against the individual. Consequently, contemplation of so drastic a step, the least preferable of all alternatives, the one personnel problem few administrators relish, is a matter which must be given careful and deliberate consideration.

No discussion of personnel termination would be complete without bringing to the attention of the reader its relationship to emerging social values. The absolute right of institutions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to dismiss persons for any reasons whatsoever has undergone considerable modification due to forces such as: unions; court rulings; civil service systems; protective federal, state (tenure, *e.g.*), and local legislation; emerging personnel policies of school systems; and growing public sentiment against dismissal.

Despite the fact that personnel termination is generally considered to be an unfortunate development, it is one which every system must face when there are instances of unsatisfactory performance, misconduct, lack of qualifications for the position, or changing requirements for the position. Termination of inefficient personnel, however distasteful, is important to the effectiveness of the system as a whole and to upholding the system's

policy that *the work related to each position must be performed satisfactorily*. There are occasions in the life of every system when termination is absolutely essential if it (the system) is to be fair to effective performers, students, parents, and taxpayers. Further, termination of some personnel on the part of the system often turns out to be a most beneficial course of action for both parties.

Because of the importance and complexity of personnel termination problems, school systems need *a plan of action* designed to resolve questions such as those listed below. Each of the questions will be discussed in turn.

- Who is *responsible* for the dismissal action?
- What are the system's *reasons* for dismissal?
- What is the system dismissal *procedure*?

Responsibility for Termination. When all other courses of corrective action have been found wanting, and the system concludes that it is too expensive, impossible, or inexpedient to retain the ineffective performer indefinitely, a termination action is initiated. The basis for terminating an individual's employment in the system is a set of written policies and procedures which have been approved formally and adopted by the system's governing body. This group takes formal action to dismiss any member of the system upon review of the recommendation of its chief executive officer. In recommending such action to the board of education, the chief executive carefully adheres to any procedural requirements established by law or by contractual agreements (grievance procedures, union contracts, board policy).

Reasons for Dismissal. While the discussion herein is focused upon ineffective performance as the reason for termination of an individual's employment, there are other bases, as outlined earlier in the text. Legislation governing employment in the public schools usually prescribes the reasons for which an employee may be dismissed. A systematic termination plan goes beyond statutory prescriptions for dismissal and clearly defines in the organization or personnel manual the reasons for and the procedures by which a dismissal action is carried out. The reasons for putting the termination plan in writing are numerous, including: a uniform approach to applying the same criteria to all personnel; a system document which is explained to each newly appointed staff member; a formal plan which is essential in the event of litigation; and a means by which the system clarifies for all concerned what is meant by ineffective performance, how it is determined, and the steps which are taken to prevent its occurrence.

Dismissal Procedure. The formidable array of constraints against severance of personnel make development of and adherence to a systematic dismissal

procedure an organizational obligation of high priority. Guidelines are outlined below and in Figure 14 to bring into focus the significance of the dismissal procedure to both the individual and to the system. Examination of the model shown in Figure 14 indicates that it is based upon these considerations:

- Implicit in every contract of service is the assumption that the individual performer will carry out his contractual obligations.
- Implicit in every contract is the assumption that the system will assist the individual through supervisory, facilities, and related means to perform his obligations.
- The system has a right and a responsibility to require that the individual perform effectively the services agreed to in the contract.
- The system has the right and responsibility to conduct its operations with maximum efficiency and effectiveness. In the event that individuals do not perform according to expectations, it (the system) has the responsibility to maintain and to adhere to an orderly and equitable arrangement for personnel separation.
- Protection of the rights of the individual through contractual, legal and quasi-legal arrangements, as well as through evolving social values, has come to occupy a central position in any consideration of termination of the service agreement.
- The system has the obligation to accord the individual "due process" in any action initiated to terminate his services.[18]

Each of the factors listed in Figure 14 will be discussed in the text following, the intent of which is to provide guidelines by which the system carries out its rights and responsibilities as they relate to ineffective performance, as well as its obligation to conduct the dismissal procedure in a manner which will not deprive the individual of his rights by denial of "due process."

Coordination. Coordination refers to unity of group action among members of the system to achieve a common purpose. Coordination among system administrators in planning and implementing the dismissal process is essential because of the interdependent effort which is involved. Since different officials have different responsibilities to perform, each must have an understanding of the goals of the dismissal process, the procedures and

[18] Due process, as viewed by the United States Supreme Court in the landmark case of *Goldberg v. Kelly*, includes the following elements: a) timely and adequate notice detailing the reason for the proposed termination; b) effective opportunity to defend oneself by confronting adverse witnesses; c) opportunity to cross-examine witnesses; d) adequate notice before the hearing; e) opportunity to be heard; f) assurance that the decision makers' conclusions will be based only on evidence presented during the hearing and that they will be impartial. *Goldberg v. Kelly*, 397 U.S. 254.

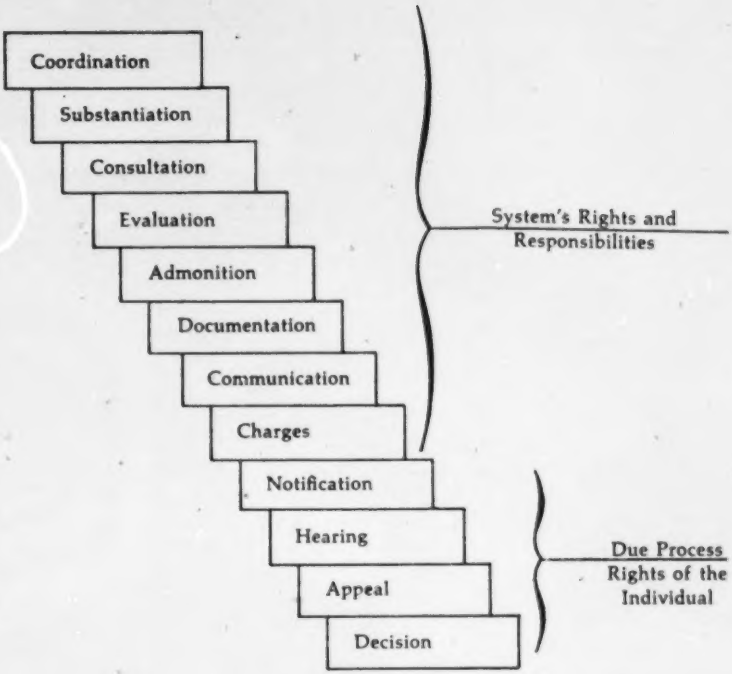


Figure 14. Model of the Dismissal Procedure

how they are interrelated, the individual and group responsibilities, and the timing of efforts by which unity of effort can result. Like any other organizational endeavor, the dismissal process must be planned, organized, directed, and controlled. In effect, before a dismissal proceeding is initiated by the system, plans should be carefully developed and institutionalized to the extent that the participating administrators are fully cognizant of individual and group responsibilities.

Substantiation. Reference has been made earlier to the proposition that an individual's position in a school system represents for him something on which he places high values because he depends upon it for its contribution to his life and his livelihood. Position retention means constancy in compensation and collateral benefits, security, opportunity for advancement, and the major means by which he and his family satisfy their needs. Dismissal from the position may mean dislocation and disruption of his life and that of his family, embarrassment, demoralization, interference with plans, and result in a period of denial, sacrifice, and suffering. So

serious a matter as dismissal usually evokes reaction from the affected individual, usually in the form of a legal challenge to the system's intent to remove him from his place of employment. Consequently, when the system initiates a dismissal procedure against one of its members for ineffective performance, the central question becomes: "Can we support our contention of ineffective performance with proof or evidence?" One observer has noted that the evidence should be *relevant, credible, objective,* and *preponderant.* It should be:

- Directly related to the offense as charged and not a shotgun accumulation of various misdeeds, some of which are to the point and others far afield.
- Worthy of belief and not absurd, illogical or contradictory.
- Factually provable, and not composed mainly of unsupported opinions, hearsay, and gossip.
- Substantial enough in weight of testimony, records, and/or incidents to justify both the charge and the penalty.[19]

Thus, unless the nature and sufficiency of the evidence is deemed pertinent and adequate prior to the initiation of the dismissal process, the better part of wisdom is for system restraint until the evidence is sufficient or for abandonment of the effort entirely.

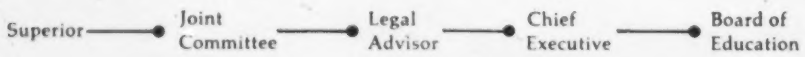
Consultation. Responsibility for discharging personnel should not be restricted to a single individual in the system. One of the prerequisites to actual dismissal proceedings is a thoroughgoing review of the individual's performance. Sources of information about the incumbent's past performance, the situational factors which may affect his ability to do his work, the administrative actions which have been initiated to help the incumbent improve his performance, the judgments of the supervisors and their recommendations for dismissal—all are reviewed to determine whether the grounds for dismissal are supportable and durable in the event of legal challenge.

Some institutions establish a joint committee, including legal advisors, to review the nature and sufficiency of the evidence which has been accumulated relative to the contemplated course of dismissal action. Various personnel involved in the action, including board officials, are interviewed or consulted, so that the matter under consideration is viewed from a number of backgrounds and perspectives. The aim of consultation is to explore the implications of the proposed course of action, as well as to check adherence to dismissal procedural requirements. In sum, the system observes the usual precautions prior to notification of the individual. Even a casual review of

[19] Orme W. Phelps, *Discipline and Discharge in the Unionized Firm* (Berkeley, Cal.: University of California Press, 1959), 113.

dismissal proceedings shows that disputes constantly arise over facts or the lack thereof.

Evaluation. The model in Figure 14 includes evaluation as one of the elements in the dismissal process. This step focuses on reviewing and evaluating the information which has been gathered by the system relative to the ineffective performance of an individual. Each of the key system agents engages in an objective analysis to determine whether the facts are sufficient to sustain the dismissal action. As illustrated below, the evaluation begins with the individual's superior and ends with the board of education, the agent which authorizes the chief executive to initiate dismissal proceedings. The key agent in the evaluation is the administrator to whom the individual reports. It is he who is responsible for providing the system participants with the facts necessary to initiate dismissal proceedings. The key role of other participants is to assess the facts and their relevance to the charges.



Admonition. Awareness of an individual's marginal performance or underperformance is usually not a realization which develops suddenly. When the superior does become aware of a performance gap, he usually reviews the position expectations against the actual performance, noting major strengths and deficiencies. This informal evaluation is reviewed with the subordinate and made a matter of record. The individual is informed, reproved mildly but seriously about the performance gap and the corrective action needed to be taken. Hence, both an initial evaluation and early warning of marginal performance is basic to later efforts to substantiate the action taken by the system to correct performance problems. Delay in bringing to the attention of the system member his marginal performance is an invitation to difficulty in effecting a dismissal. People who challenge a dismissal usually question the rectitude and fairness of delaying for months or years the dismissal of a marginal performer when the facts of ineffectiveness were known long in advance of the dismissal proceedings.

Documentation. Records of events, incidents, self-appraisals, discussions, interviews, suggestions for improvement, admonitions, performance history of the incumbent, performance evaluations, and memoranda of efforts to assist the individual to improve his performance are vital to the initiation of any dismissal procedure. It goes without saying that documentation is a tool of cardinal importance in the dismissal procedure.

Communication. If coordination of a dismissal procedure is to be effective, various individuals within the system who have a right to know about

pending action should be kept informed. This includes obligations to the union, especially if there are procedural requirements to this effect. The matter of keeping other school officials abreast of developments is particularly important if the individual is to be replaced, and if recruitment is anticipated. The business office is centrally involved in any dismissal action, for system contractual obligations to the individual must be scrupulously honored, such as severance pay, collateral benefits, and insurance.

Charges. Formal procedure is the essence of due process. This means that dismissal proceedings against any individual in the system are not initiated until a formal, written, signed complaint is filed with the chief executive officer. As indicated below, the timing of notice, the contents, and the explanation of charges in the notice are key elements in the formal procedure.

Notification. Aside from any previous formal or informal communication from the system to the individual about his ineffective performance, there should be at least three formal notifications involved in dismissal: a) forewarning; b) final warning; and c) notice of intent to dismiss. Forewarning, of course, precedes any final action, the standard approach being discussions between superior and subordinate followed by a formal communication confirming the system's dissatisfaction with the individual's performance, including underlying reasons. The final warning, which is communicated in writing to the incumbent after previous efforts and forewarning to improve his performance have failed, includes items such as: a) reminder of the forewarning; b) reaffirmation of the gap between performance and standards; c) the time period within which performance progress will be reviewed; d) the action which will be taken if satisfactory performance is not achieved. The final warning is an important document which carefully specifies the precise reasons the system is concerned about the incumbent's performance. The notice of intent to dismiss usually is reduced to writing and delivered personally to the individual involved, and includes the timing of the dismissal procedure and explanation of the charges. Due process permits the individual time to reply to the charges, the right of protest and appeal, and reinstatement rights if charges are not sustained.

Hearing, Appeal, Decision. The remaining steps in the dismissal procedure, as outlined in Figure 14, include a formal hearing conducted by the board of education within the time frame indicated in the date of notice to initiate dismissal proceedings. The board of education conducts the formal hearing, reviews the evidence, and makes the decision concerning dismissal. The individual is guaranteed by due process the right to appeal an unfavorable decision. The formal appeal procedures are usually stipulated in the statutes or in contractual agreements between the system and the union which represents the individual charged with ineffective performance.

SUMMARY

Just as there are no simple, all-purpose solutions to personnel problems such as motivation, compensation, security, manpower planning, and development, so there are no pat answers to how a system deals effectively with the ineffective performer. The reasons for human behavior are complex, and the enduring incongruity between the individual and the system requires ongoing efforts to maintain continuity, stability, and effectiveness of the enterprise. This is especially true when we consider the flow of new forces into the administrative process such as union representation for individual rights, government employment policies, the willingness of individuals to challenge the system, rising expectations of individuals, and emerging disparate value systems. The time has arrived when school systems must develop and maintain better plans for dealing with individuals who do not perform according to expectations. The rights of the individual and the impact of these rights in maintaining an effective system call for creative approaches to the solution of personnel problems. Ideally, human resources planning should include better recruitment and selection plans to keep to a minimum the number of incompetents who enter the system; better position designs which enable the individual to know promptly his role expectations; better performance appraisal systems for early identification of performance problems; better development plans to assist people to perform effectively; and better ways of monitoring and controlling human resources plans in a manner that will maximize the probability of achieving both individual and system goals.

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